



INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Charles S. Cox
City Manager

DATE: July 5, 2018

SUBJECT: Ordinance 3510 – Specific Use Permit for a drive-through restaurant, a non drive-through restaurant, and a surface parking lot exceeding 50 cars; and associated Detailed Site Plan located at 2425 Valley View Lane

Existing Conditions

This 1.59-acre vacant property is located on the northeast corner of Valley View Lane and I-35 / Stemmons Freeway. The site is an irregular shaped tract has vehicular access from Valley View Lane. An ONCOR easement is crossing the property on the eastern side. The property is located within Planned Development District No. 86 (PD-86) Station Area Code.

Adjacent land uses include: an undeveloped lot and an office/business service use to the north; an undeveloped lot to the east; Stemmons Freeway to the west; and across Valley View Lane to the south is a multi-tenant retail/commercial building.

The City of Farmers Branch currently owns the property, and is proposing to sell it to the applicant/developer, Retail Partners LLC.

Zoning Request

The applicant is proposing to develop the property and construct two restaurant buildings – one with a drive-through operation on the western portion of the site (Starbucks), and the other without a drive-through operation (Chipotle) on the eastern portion. Both restaurants will share the access drive from Valley View Lane and will have surface parking lots. PD-86 requires all surface parking for 50 cars or more within one or more contiguous lots to be approved with a Specific Use Permit. The proposed parking lot for this development will exceed 50 spaces (66 spaces proposed). PD-86 specifies that any permitted use having a drive-through service is permitted with a Specific Use

Permit; therefore, the applicant is requesting the SUP for the surface parking lot and the drive-through restaurant. The applicant is also requesting several special exceptions with this SUP.

Site Design

The applicant is anticipating that they may divide the property into two lots, corresponding to the proposed buildings. The two lots will have shared access from Valley View Lane and a shared internal access drive aisle to ensure proper internal circulation for both restaurants. The existing median along Valley View Lane will be reworked to consolidate two existing median openings into one, shifting the median opening further east and lengthening the vehicle storage lane, to better accommodate the access to the property.

- The western lot, Lot 1, will be comprised of 0.9 acres and will contain the drive-through restaurant. The building will be one story in height (21 feet high) and will be comprised of 2,138 square feet and an outside patio (409 square feet) on the southern side, facing Valley View Lane.
- The eastern lot, Lot 2, will be comprised of 0.7 acres. The restaurant building will be one-story in height (19.6 feet high) and will be comprised of 2,400 square feet and an outside patio (468 square feet) on the eastern side, visible from Valley View Lane. No drive-through operations are proposed for this restaurant.

Elevations

All building façades will be typical storefront design with an architectural style combining contemporary lines, and clean and smooth surfaces.

All exterior building façades will contain minimum 75% masonry, with wood panels / cementitious panels as accent material (maximum 25%). The façades visible from public view will have large metal awnings and decorative light fixtures.

Parking

The Detailed Site Plan includes a total of 66 parking spaces in the surface parking lots serving both restaurants. Lot 1 for the drive-through restaurant will have 28 parking spaces and Lot 2 for the non drive-through restaurant will have 38 spaces. PD-86 requires all lots over 20,000 square feet to provide a minimum of 1 parking space for each 1,000 square feet of non-residential gross floor area as shared parking, therefore 3 parking spaces are required for each lot (minimum 6 spaces total required).

PD-86 was created to enable and encourage a walkable mixed-use urban center. One of the parking goals of the PD is to enable people to park at a single convenient location that provides access to a variety of pedestrian friendly environments that encourages shared parking among multiple uses. The parking lot for this development is located mainly in the side and rear portion of the lots and is proposed to be a shared parking lot.

Landscape and Open Spaces

Approximately 31% of the site is proposed to be natural or landscaped open space. The trees (28 trees proposed) will be a combination of Elm, Oak and Crape Myrtle trees and are distributed in the parking lot islands and along Valley View Lane. PD-86 requires 15% of the overall site to be landscaped open space, street trees placed at maximum every 30 feet, and 1 tree per 600 square feet of open space. The proposed Landscape Plan complies with all PD-86 landscape requirements.

The Valley View Lane street frontage will be redeveloped to accommodate the proposed development including: all power poles will be removed; existing power lines will be buried underground; a 7-foot wide sidewalk with 6-foot street tree wells; and new light poles will be installed.

Signage

The applicant is proposing to install free-standing signs on site and wall signs on both buildings. One free-standing pole sign, maximum 30 feet high and 128 square feet in area, is proposed to be installed along I-35 near the north end of the site. One monument sign, maximum 10 feet high and 100 square feet in area, is proposed along Valley View Lane, near the southwest corner of the subject site. Both buildings will contain wall signs on three sides; the wall signs will not exceed 2 feet in height.

Special Exceptions

For this Detailed Site Plan, the following Special Exceptions are being requested:

Special Exception #1 - According to PD-86 requirements, buildings are to be located along Valley View Lane at the Required Building Line (RBL) for a distance equivalent to 85% of street frontage. The RBL along Valley View Lane is a maximum 5 feet setback measured from the property line. The purpose of the maximum setback/RBL is to have buildings define the street. Both proposed buildings will be setback minimum 45 feet from the property line along Valley View Lane.

Special Exception #2 - PD-86 requires a street wall 6 to 8 feet high along any RBL that is not occupied by buildings along Valley View Lane. The purpose of the street wall is to continue a defined building façade/edge along the street/RBL. No wall is proposed along Valley View Lane due to the distance of which the buildings are setback.

Special Exception #3 - PD-86 requires a street wall minimum 3 feet high for the screening of the surface parking lot along the eastern side of the lot. The applicant is proposing a dense shrubbery line along the eastern property line to screen the surface parking lot.

Special Exception #4 - PD-86 requires that the ground story finished floor elevation of the buildings to be a maximum 18 inches above the sidewalk. The purpose of this requirement is to keep the building finish floor at a comparable level to the adjacent sidewalk if the building were to be located at the RBL, thus allowing the building to be complementary with the public realm.

Due to the buildings being proposed to have a wide setback from the sidewalk, this requirement is not germane to this site layout.

Special Exception #5 - PD-86 requires all buildings to have a pitched roof configuration. Both proposed buildings will have a flat roof configuration.

Special Exception #6 - PD-86 requires all window openings to have the horizontal dimension smaller than the vertical dimension, and that windows shall be a minimum of 30 inches away from the building corner. The purpose of this type of window design corresponds with traditional and/or classical architecture design. All proposed building elevations include long horizontal windows, such that the window height is narrower than the window width, and some of the windows encroach the minimum 30-inches from building corner requirement. The proposed window design is consistent with the proposed contemporary building design of clean and simple façade lines.

Special Exception #7 - PD-86 does not allow the drive-through access from Valley View Lane. Due to the irregular configuration of the lot and the limited access opportunities from I-35, the main access into the property is proposed from Valley View Lane.

Special Exception #8 - PD-86 does not allow free-standing pole signs in the Station Area and does not allow monument signs along Valley View Lane. The applicant is proposing a free-standing pole sign on the northwest corner of the lot, oriented perpendicular to I-35 and a monument sign near the southwest corner of the site oriented perpendicular to Valley View Lane. The proposed signage is consistent with the signage standards for the I-35 corridor in Farmers Branch and indicative of this type of site design.

Special Exceptions Summary – The majority of the special exceptions are imposed by the drive-through configuration and necessities of this irregular shaped lot located at the corner of a major thoroughfare and a regional highway. However, the applicant is proposing a site layout that is consistent with some of the objectives established by PD-86 for a vibrant and walkable town center including an enhanced streetscape along Valley View Lane and outdoor patios connected to the public realm along Valley View Lane.

Due to the quality and scale of this development and considering the constraints of the lot configuration and placement – coupled with the fact that the site is on the north side of Valley View Lane away from the DART Station/Station Area core and adjacent to a regional highway – staff believes that these Special Exceptions will not take away from the vision proposed by PD-86. Additionally, the site layout is comparable to that which was approved for the restaurant park development at Bee Street, on the south side of Valley View Lane.

Staff is in support of all Special Exceptions.

Traffic Impact Analysis

During the review process, staff recommended the applicant provide an access drive approach from the I-35 frontage road for a better traffic flow in and around this development. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will allow for the access drive approach at the northwest

corner of the site, but the applicant decided not to pursue this option at this time citing concerns related to negative implications associated with on-site drive-through operations. The applicant, however, has designed the site to accommodate an access drive approach at the north end of the site should it be needed in the future.

Comprehensive Plan

The Central Area Plan recognizes the DART Station District and reinforces the Station Area Code/ PD-86 to guide the development of this area into a new city downtown. *“The DART Station District will serve as a more urban, pedestrian friendly environment. In contrast, areas within the IH35-E district will be more automobile accessible in order to capitalize on pass-through trips and provide quick and easy access along the Interstate. A mixture of restaurants, retail, services and office space will be present within the District. Extensive landscaping and design enhancements should be required due to the highly visible nature of land along the Interstate.”*

For the I-35 District, the Central Area Plan recommends that *“while office will generally be the preferred land use type within the district, major intersections may be utilized for retail services, such as restaurants, banks or other similar services which serve employees at nearby office centers and residents alike.”*

This proposed development being located within the Station Area and at the intersection of a major thoroughfare with I-35 is consistent with the recommendations of the Central Area Plan.

Public Response

Eight (8) zoning notification letters were mailed to the surrounding property owners on June 15, 2018. Two (2) zoning notification signs were also placed on the site on the same day. A public notice ad was placed in Dallas Morning News on June 27, 2018. As of July 5, 2018, no written correspondence has been received by the City.

Recommendation:

On June 25, 2018, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted 7-1 to recommend approval of the Specific Use Permit and associated Detailed Site Plan including the Special Exception as presented in Ordinance No. 3510.

Possible Council Action:

1. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 3510.
2. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 3510 with the following modifications ...
3. Motion to deny Ordinance No. 3510.
4. Motion to continue discussion at the next meeting.